Department of Labour

NOVA SCOTIA

BUSINESS PLAN 1998
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PLANNING CONTEXT

The Nova Scotia Department of Labour marked 65 years of service to labour, management and the general public in 1997. The act that established the department was passed on March 31, 1932. The department's primary role is one of "acting in a regulatory capacity," to ensure compliance with its various statutory and regulatory obligations. The strategic goals of the department of Labour are derived from our administrative responsibility for 17 Acts and 55 supporting sets of regulations which govern health and safety in the workplace, fair wage compensation, employment standards, effective labour / management relations and public safety (buildings and equipment).

The Department is currently staffed by 143 persons in eight offices across the Province.

In 1998/99, legislative reform will continue in the Occupational Health and Safety and Public Safety areas of the Department. In keeping with our quality program, public consultations, promotion and educational training are major components of all new legislative / regulatory initiatives within the Department. Major initiatives in the coming fiscal year include:

- Adopt new regulations under the Occupational Health and Safety legislation covering
  - Occupational Health and Safety Committees
  - Underground Mining
  - Diving
- Introduce a new *Fire Prevention Act*
- Implement new Power Engineers and Crane Operators Regulations
- Begin review and development of new regulations covering Boiler and Pressure Vessels and Elevators and Lifts
- Seek to maintain existing services for conciliation requests and prevention programs under the *Trade Union Act* due to the extraordinary circumstances facing the public sector in 1998/99 with the removal of the Public Sector Restraint legislation effective November 1, 1997.

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The high-level budget allocations for the Department are as follows:

MAJOR PROGRAM AREA	Allocation ('000) 1998/99
Occupational Health and Safety (Administration, Field Services, Central Services, Blaster Board, Coal Miners Examination Board, OH&S Council)	5391.00
Public Safety (Administration, Boiler Safety Inspection, Elevator and Amusement Safety and Stationary Engineers Board)	772
Fire Marshal's Office (Administration, Inspection Services, Planning and Fire School Grant)	1,278
Industrial Relations Division (Conciliation Services and Industrial Relations Grants)	832
Labour Standards	960
Adjudications (Labour Relations Board, Labour Standards Tribunal, Pay Equity Commission and OH&S Appeal Panel)	652
Workers' Advisers Program	1,793
Assistance Programs - Workers' Compensation Board (Unfunded Liability and Assistance Programs)	1,237
Administration (Other) (Office of the Minister & Deputy, Business Services and Research)	1,506
Recoveries	5,361
Total Labour (Net)	**9,030**

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Department of Labour

NOVA SCOTIA

OUR VISION

The Department of Labour will provide service to Nova Scotians promoting:

- safe and healthy workplaces and work practices
- fair wage compensation, employment standards and effective labour / management relations
- safe buildings and equipment for public protection

OUR MISSION

To fulfil our vision, the Department of Labour will create a supportive and responsive environment, helping staff and clients help themselves by:

- continuously reviewing services and legislation
- using current technology
- applying and enforcing laws

OUR VALUES

Our vision and mission are based on:

- commitment
- fairness
- responsibility

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Department of Labour

NOVA SCOTIA

STRATEGIC GOALS

The strategic goals of the Department of Labour are derived from our administrative responsibility for 17 acts and 55 supporting sets of regulations covering various aspects of the Labour Market and Public Safety.

- Promote safe and healthy workplaces and work practices;
- Promote fair wage compensation, employment standards, and effective labour/management relations;
- Promote safe buildings & equipment for public protection;
- Continuously improve the service we deliver and improve public and staff satisfaction with the work of the Department.
- Promote the rights of injured workers.

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Department of Labour

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CORE BUSINESS FUNCTIONS

Regulatory Compliance

- Inspects and investigates workplaces, buildings and equipment to ensure they comply with provincial health, safety and employment laws.

Education and Consultation

- Provides education and consultation on various workplace, fire, and public safety laws, regulations, referenced codes and standards to ensure awareness and competency.

Setting Standards

- Works with other jurisdictions and stakeholders to develop appropriate standards for occupational health and safety, fire safety and public safety.

Certification and Licensing

- Certifies and licenses workers, workplaces and equipment to ensure worker/employer competency and public safety.

Conciliation and Mediation Services

- Provides conciliation and mediation services to promote harmonious labour-management relations.

Advice

- Provides advice and expertise to persons and organizations in order to assist them in pursuing workers' rights under the *Workers' Compensation Act*.

Monitoring and Adjudication

- Monitors and adjudicates compliance with the *Pay Equity Act*, *Trade Union Act*, *Labour Standards Code*, and *Occupational Health and*

Safety Act.

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Department of Labour NOVA SCOTIA

PRIORITIES 1998/99

Goal #1

Promote safe and healthy workplaces and work practices.

- Propose regulations such as General Safety, Workplace Violence, Occupational Health and Safety Committee and Underground Mining under the Occupational Health and Safety Act as the consultation process allows.

- Upgrade computerized activity tracking system to introduce officer enhancements and management reports.

- Develop and deliver programs for promotion and education to ensure adequate client awareness of regulatory initiatives and their compliance.

- Respond to all recommendations resulting from the Plummer Audit of the OHS Division and the Westray Inquiry Report.

- Establish a strategic alliance with the Workers Compensation Board with a focus on making the maximum health and safety impact in the workplaces of the Province.

- Establish partnerships with the other organizations providing workplace health and safety services particularly in the private sector.

- Develop additional enforcement strategies.

Goal #2

Promote fair wage compensation, employment standards and effective labour/management relations.

- Due to the extraordinary bargaining circumstances facing the public sector in 1998/99 with the removal of the public restraint legislation effective November 1, 1997 the department will strive to:

  - maintain existing service for conciliation requests as required under the Trade Union Act.

  - continue offering preventive mediation programs

  - improve the delivery of investigative and advisory services to clients with a view to reducing the current backlog of complaints in the employment standards area.

Goal #3

Promote safe buildings and equipment for public protection.

- Introduce a new *Fire Prevention Act* and regulations including one that covers the activities of electrical contractors. The new Act is designed to clarify intent, designate responsibility and create a cooperation spirt between the various agencies concerned with fire safety in Nova Scotia

- Expand and provide a quality control system for our juvenile fire setter's prevention program. Participants in the program include various mental health agencies, children's aid, schools, the justice system, police and fire departments

- Develop and provide fire safety training programs to the staff of health, educational and correctional institutions throughout Nova Scotia. One of the leading causes for the loss of life from fire in these institutions is the lack of knowledge of emergency procedures

- Maintain existing levels of inspections and certification in support of our goals with added emphasis during 1998/99 on the larger industrial plants, fish plants and high occupancy locations such as hotels, hospitals and nursing homes. (i.e., Elevator and Lifts, Power Engineers, Boiler and Pressure Vessels)

- Review, update and implement improvements in the following legislative areas:

    - Power Engineers Regulations
    - Crane Operators Regulations
    - Boiler and Pressure Vessels Regulations
    - Elevator and Lifts Act

- Upgrade computerized inspection tracking system to introduce enhancements and management reports

- Develop and deliver programs for promotion and education to ensure adequate client awareness of regulatory initiatives

Goal #4

Continuously improve the service we deliver and improve public and staff satisfaction with the work of the Department.

- Continue to support the Department's Commitment to Quality Program by continued participation in identifying and implementing improvements in our services and how we deliver them. Also to provide ongoing skills development to enable our staff to develop and respond to a continuous improvement work environment.

- During 1998/99 we will continue to solicit input from the public and staff regarding the level of satisfaction with our services and determine if they continue to satisfactorily meet the needs for which they were intended.

- Implement toll-free lines to improve client service

- Improve our website to provide quick access to information on our programs, legislation and regulations.

- Coordinate Year 2000 efforts within the Department to ensure the Department will be able to function normally after the year 2000.

Goal #5

Promote the rights of injured workers

- Provision of a higher level of service to injured workers in Nova Scotia at reduced total cost through the development of self help packages, expanded public education and representation by a team approach.

Performance by Goal, 1996-'97
Performance by Goal, 1997-'98

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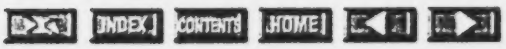
BUDGET CONTEXT

The 1998-1999 department priorities have been designed to support and ensure the delivery of the major program areas.

The department's primary role is one of "acting in a regulatory capacity". The department's major responsibility is to ensure compliance with its various statutory and regulatory obligations and to provide financial assistance to the Worker's Compensation Board.

The regulatory nature of the department drives the budget demand and establishes the priorities on which the budget is founded.

In order to deliver the major programs, 85% of the department's net budget has been allocated to salaries and benefits and to the financial assistance programs (largely WCB).



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CORPORATE LINKAGES / PARTNERSHIPS

INITIATIVE	PARTNER(S)	PURPOSE
Employment and Safety Legislation Harmonization	Other Atlantic Provinces	The development of a process for developing legislation on an Atlantic basis and participating in selected projects to further this initiative.
Certification Program	Nova Scotia Construction Safety Association APENS Forest Safety Society	The department co-sponsors voluntary certification programs with our partners to improve occupational health and safety standards in various industries.
Non Binding Voluntary Arbitration Program	Voluntary Economic Planning Labour-Management Forum	Provide an option which is efficient and as cost effective as traditional arbitration while improving labour/management relations.
Training Initiatives Partnerships	Employers/Unions	The OSH Division will be providing technical training to staff and has approached professional associations, employees and unions to determine their interest in participating in the training to defray costs.
Computerized Inspection Tracking System	Titan Technology Ltd.	Commercialization of programs to North American jurisdictions.
	Professional Groups /	A project focused on getting

Project Minerva	Universities / Canadian Society of Safety Engineering	health and safety principles into the professional education programs in management and engineering.
CCOHS	Other Jurisdictions	The department funds the inquiry desk on a per capita basis with all other Canadian jurisdictions to ensure that employers and employees can access a no cost information service to answer OSH questions.
Fire Investigation System	Office of the Fire Marshal/ Arson Investigation Association / Arson Prevention Council / Insurance Industry / Canadian Fire Investigation School	Providing a fire investigation system through the training of local fire investigators.
Harmonization of Elevator Standards *(under development)*	CSA / Other Jurisdictions / Industry	Harmonization of elevator standards to form one binational standard.
Employment Standards Awareness	Industry / Education Organizations / Labour Standards Division	To educate employers and employees on the minimum standards of employment in Nova Scotia.
Learn Not To Burn Program	Burn Prevention Association Schoolboards / Dept.of Education / Fire Departments	To provide education to elementary and junior high school students on fire safety
Safe-T-Rider	Elevator Industry / Schoolboards	To promote escalator safety to children
Bargaining Committee Education	Labour Groups/	A voluntary program focusing on the education of union and

Program for First-Contract Negotiations	Management Groups	management bargaining committees by reviewing the role of conciliators and the conciliation process
Self-Regulation of Propane Industry/Electrical Contractors	Propane Industry / Electrical Contractors / Office of the Fire Marshal	To create an accountability framework in the propane and electrical contracting industries that will lead to industry self regulation.
Juvenile Fire Setters Intervention Program	Justice Children's Aid Mental Health Professionals Police Departments Fire Departments	Intervention to prevent repeat fire setting by youths through multi agency action.

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OUTCOME MEASURES

*(**NOTE:** To print the table. please set your **Browser's Settings** to **Legal***

Strategic Goal	Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Targets/Trends/Comp A (Actual) T (Targ		
					1996	1997
Promote Safe & Healthy Workplaces and Work Practices	Improved Occupational Health and Safety	OH&S Performance	Accident Rate Frequency and Severity Defined as			

			- Avg. # of Registered WCB Claims/100 Employees		7.97	8.19
			- Avg. # of Compensable Days for All Short Term Disability Claims Receiving Benefits During the Year/100 Claimants, and		4168	3964
			- Avg. # of Compensable Days for Short Term Disability Claims Opened in the Year/100 Claimants		2247	2545
						1996
	Effective Legislation	Level of Legislation & Regulation Development & Review				
			# of Act /			3

			Regulations Reviewed / Developed			
			New Legislation & Regulations Implemented			3
						1996
	Client Awareness / Responsibility	Level of Communications Provided	Number of Public Workings Groups on Regulation Development			4
			Number of Public Information Sessions Held on New Regulations			21
				Targets 1999/2000		
Promote Fair Wage Compensation, Employment Standards, and Effective Labour / Management Relations	Efficient/ Effective Provision of Labour Standards Services	Complaint Levels - Assignment Times	Length of Time for Assignment	Within 60 days of rece		
		Resolution Levels	Length of Time for Proper Resolution from Time of Assignment	Within 90 days of rece		
				Targets 1998/99		
Promote Safe Building and Equipment for	Effective Legislation	Level of Legislation & Regulation Development &	Number of Regulations Reviewed / Developed	-Boiler and Pressure V Regulations		

Public Protection		Review				
			New Legislation & Regulations Implemented	-Power Engineers Act -Crane Operator's Act -Fire Prevention Act & -Electrical Installation R -Propane Regulations		
				Targets	**1996/97**	**1997**
	Client Awareness / Responsibility	Level of Communications Provided	Number of Public Working Groups on Regulation Development		2	8(A)
			Number of Public Information Sessions Held on New Act and Regulations		0	10(A

			Number of Health Care and Correctional Facility Staff Trained			150(
				Targets	**1998/99**	
	Improved Fire and Public Safety	Number of Interventions	Number of Interventions Versus Number of Repeat Offenders	20/4(T)		
				Targets	**1996/97**	**1997**
			Number of Municipal Fire Inspectors		28	28 (

				Targets	**1996/97**	**1997**
Promote Safe Buildings and Equipment for Public Protection		Level of Risk Exposure to Injury from Boilers, Pressure Vessels, Elevators, Lifts and Amusement Rides	# Accidents Reported		26	12(A
			# Reported Elevator Accidents/ 100 Licensed Elevators & Lifts		.74	.36(
			# Unsafe Units Removed from Service		41	42(A
			% Unsafe Units Found		.8%	.76%

			Avg. # Directives / inspections		43	66(
				Targets	1996/97	1997
Promote the Rights of Injured Workers	Efficient / Effective Provision of Legal Services to Injured Workers (Workers' Advisers Program)	Level of Costs	Under Review	Under Review		

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COMMUNICATIONS

Key Messages

- **The department is committed to protecting Nova Scotians . . . helping people stay healthy and safe at work ... enhancing public safety.**

  For example:

  - New rules and education will help workers and employers work towards improving health and safety. The department will back that up with enforcement.

  - A new *Fire Prevention Act* and increased fire safety training will help protect people and property from fire loss.

  - New rules for safe operation of cranes, elevators, boilers and pressure vessels will help protect Nova Scotians.

- **Nova Scotians deserve fair treatment, fair pay and respect .... in the workplace ... if they are injured on the job.**

  For example:

  - Faster, better investigation and advice to workers on employment issues is a priority.

  - Injured workers receive advice and support with their WCB appeals through the Workers' Advisers Program.

- **Improving Nova Scotia's labour-management climate is good for business, workers and our economy. It helps attract investment and jobs. It is one of the department's key goals.**

  For example:

  - Proactive programs improve labour-management relations across our province.

  - We're prepared for a challenging period of collective bargaining -- we have the right resources in place.

- **Overall, we are committed improving service to Nova Scotians, listening to concerns, and working together.**

  For example:

  - We are working to improve the safety services we offer Nova Scotians with better training for officers, some increases in staffing, better ways of doing inspections and working with industry. The department is adopting a Risk Management Approach to target strategic areas

Key Audiences

- Employers
- Employees
- Labour organizations and other employee associations
- Business and other employer/management associations
- Professional / industry associations (ie: Barristers' Society, NS Construction Safety Association)
- Other interest groups (ie: NS Safety Council, fire service)
- Departmental employees
- Government employees
- Department advisory councils (OHS & fire prevention)
- MLAs
- Media

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Department of Labour NOVA SCOTIA

CORPORATE SERVICES UNIT

The Finance Corporate Services Unit provides financial, human resources, and information technology services to the departments of Labour, Finance and Human Resources and as well as eleven Public Service Votes. The following sections provide an overview of each of these corporate services as well as specific business services/projects planned for the Department of Labour in 1998-99.

Highlights from Financial Services

The role of the Financial Services division of the Corporate Services Unit is to provide day-to-day managing of accounting transactions and to provide financial planning advice and analysis to support business decisions within our client departments. During 1998-99 the following key initiatives will be undertaken to support the Department of Labour:

- As a relatively new structure, Financial Services will continue to develop and implement an appropriate organizational structure which will support the financial and service delivery requirements of Department of Labour. This will include finalizing our organizational structure and defining job functions and training requirements for CSU staff.

- Identify financial procedures and processes within the Department of Labour for potential change based on accepted accounting standards and "best" business practices.

- Continue to learn our client's business in order to improve the timeliness and relevance of information and financial services provided to the Department of Labour.

- Implement access to the Corporate Financial Management System (CFMS/SAP) for department staff and provide training to ensure full functionality and benefits of the system are being utilized.

- Develop a plan to meet the department's needs with respect to financial analysis in user fee recoveries, cost/benefit analysis and other projects.

Highlights from Human Resources

Initiatives 1998-99

The Corporate Services Unit has responsibility to deliver a number of corporate programs across its client base. The programs directly affecting Department of Labour are Attendance Management Program and Occupational Health and Safety. These programs will be on-going and will require Human Resources to support not only management, but all employees in the department.

- The Department of Labour will be continuing to implement its Human Resources Plan. The Plan is an integral part of the department's operation involving staff at all levels in the organization. The Plan's emphasis will be on training and development, performance management program, career planning and succession planning. Reviews will be undertaken to look at the effectiveness of the organizational structure while improving responsiveness to changing needs of clients. planning.

- Performance management training for Worker's Advisory Board.

- Improved communication between divisions and departments on payroll issues.

- Develop a valid format for employee appraisals especially for technical staff.

Highlights from Information Technology

As a result of the restructuring of government in 1996, the Department of Finance was assigned the responsibility to provide information technology services through a Corporate Service Unit supporting a total of thirteen departments and agencies. Significant efforts in the past year were devoted to staffing the IT component of the Corporate Service Unit to meet client needs. In support of the staffing strategy, focus groups and interviews with clients were conducted to rationalize and determine priority services.

To be effective in 1998-99 the Information Technology Corporate Service Unit will strive to achieve the following goals:

- Safeguard applications and technical infrastructure

- Enable our clients to meet their business objectives

- Maximize existing investment in Information Technology

Priority initiatives in support of the above mentioned goals are as follows:

- Year 2000 compliance
- Continued standardization and enhancement of the technology infrastructure, communications and software
- Analyze, enhance, develop and/or manage specialized systems for our clients such Tracking System, etc.
- Continued roll out of Help Desk with improved support services as a major focus.
- Implementation of a Service Delivery Strategy for priority IT services clients
- Provide business analysis and corporate modeling as resources permit
- Assessment and coordination of IT training requirements and identification of delivery mechanisms
- Develop appropriate policies and procedures for the information technology function

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